

Project Fact Sheet

Collaborators

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Who are we?

We are a small group of concerned academics who wanted to understand and properly criticize an ongoing problem (described below) we see in gender studies and related academic disciplines. We see this problem having negative social and political implications on a global scale, and we think constructive conversation within academia has become nearly impossible. We hope that this project will reboot that conversation and initiate necessary reforms. Because of the politicized nature of these disciplines, it bears mentioning that all three of us would be best classified as left-leaning liberals.

Project summary

We engaged in a one-year immersive exploration to attempt to understand certain academic fields as “outsiders within” and test their scholarship at its highest levels. To speak broadly, these include gender studies and other cultural studies fields within the humanities and reaching into sociology, psychology, and, perhaps most worryingly, education.

The specific problem we targeted has various names in various quarters and is difficult to pin down. Careful academics would refer to it as “critical constructivism” and/or “blank slatism” and its scholars as “radical constructivists.” (In this sense, it is the descendants of postmodernist and poststructuralist thought from the mid 20th century.) Pundits have termed it “academic leftism” or “cultural studies” and identify it with the term “political correctness.”

We prefer to call it “grievance studies” because many of these fields refer to themselves as “[something] studies” and because they operate primarily by focusing upon and inflaming the grievances of certain identity groups. We think it represents a significant and influential *subset* of the scholarship coming out of cultural studies within the humanities, sociology, anthropology, and other social sciences and that is gaining increasing power over our universities, institutions, media, and culture.

Because formal scholarly criticism of these fields (see Pinker, 2003; Sokal and Bricmont, 1998; Söderlund and Madison, 2017; Stern, 2016, in particular) has not created needed reform, we attempted a criticism by means other than detached external scholarship. As the study developed, we came to see the project as a serious ethnographic inquiry into fields, journals, and scholars who exhibit varying commitments to the assumptions of grievance studies. In that sense, ours stands distinctly apart from anything that has been done so far and is a unique line of inquiry. Distinguishing it particularly from previous academic hoaxes, many of our papers were designed to be quite serious, although all forwarded a variety of intentional flaws and satirical elements.

Specifically, over the course of a year we wrote twenty academic papers and submitted them to significant peer-reviewed academic journals in these fields with the hopes of getting them published. Every paper combined an effort to better understand the field itself with an attempt to get absurdities and morally fashionable political ideas published as legitimate academic research. Some papers took bigger risks in this regard than others.

Project goals

- We wanted to understand the nature of the problem in academia and the culture that produces it.
 - In that sense, this study was what anthropologists might refer to as a “reflexive ethnography of academic critical constructivism.”
 - In plainer language, what that means is that we sought to become outsiders who embedded ourselves within the culture in order to understand it and to come to fit in with it. We verified our success in this regard by getting high-level academic scholarship published in their journals, some of these quite prestigious.
- We hope to reboot the conversations about topics of cultural interest such as gender, race, sexuality, and so on and bring it back to a more rigorous basis, the nature of which remains to be determined at this time.
- We want to reintroduce skepticism of the underlying assumptions and “critical” methodologies employed in grievance studies so that scholarship regarding important questions of gender, race, sexuality, and so on can be addressed accurately and by the best possible methods.
 - This follows from our suspicion, which we think our project helps establish, that these fields are corrupted by biases favoring a particular radical political view that stems directly from certain thinkers, including Michel Foucault, Judith Butler, and many others, and an unwillingness to accept outside criticism (Stern, 2016).
- We perceive a large number of people, both inside and outside of academia, who are aware of the increasing power grievance studies scholars wield, and we wanted to provide an opportunity for these people to feel safe enough to speak out and say, “No, I’m not going along with that (until it has had more thorough and rigorous review)” and for them, along with others, especially on the left, to say, “These people do not speak for me.”
 - This problem has arisen within a culture in which dissenting ideas have not been admitted or tolerated, often resulting in legitimate criticisms being denigrated on moral grounds. For example, questioning tenets of feminist philosophy might get you branded sexist or accused of carrying internalized misogyny. Questioning critical race scholarship is written off as exhibiting “white fragility” (Robin DiAngelo, 2011, 2018), “white ignore-ance” (Barbara Applebaum, 2006), a form of intentional ignorance, a form of resistance, or seeking white approval. Of note, it is impossible to counter such claims, and attempts to do so are taken as proof of guilt.

Project methods

We wrote academic papers targeting (mostly) highly ranked, peer-reviewed journals in fields we are concerned might be corrupted by scholarship biased by “grievance studies.” These papers were submitted to the best journals we could find, given constraints of the journals’ aims and scopes, and then we used the feedback we received about them from editors and peer reviewers to improve them and our future papers.

Our primary data for the project, apart from the papers themselves and the outcomes they achieved, are the many extensive comments made by professionals working in the field (journal editors and peer reviewers) on our intentionally broken papers. We wanted to gather these data for two reasons. First, they represented our primary means of gaining expertise and thus learning how to write better papers. Second, they constitute an unvarnished look into the professional workings of the academic culture we were studying.

Each paper was submitted to higher-ranked journals first and then down a line of suitable alternatives until one of the following occurred: it was accepted; it was deemed too unlikely to succeed for reasons we came to understand to continue with it; or we ran out of time.

- Note: The project was originally slated to continue until all twenty papers had run their course or until (roughly) 18 months had elapsed, whichever came first, but we were effectively discovered by media investigations into our paper about rape culture and queer performativity at urban dog parks (see paper #1 below). This occurred just shy of one year from the formal starting date of the project.

The data we were gathering therefore consist of the track records of how the papers fared, as well as a large body of textual data in the forms of the papers themselves (thus demonstrating what the journals would be willing to publish and their responses) and the reports from the papers' expert peer reviewers, as assigned by the journals.

Provisional conclusions

Because there are serious problems with the assumptions underlying grievance studies and how scholarship in these fields proceeds, it is incredibly difficult to conclude that the work based in grievance studies can be trusted. This means we are skeptical of the conclusions and recommendations appearing in their scholarship and all subsequent work referencing it. Particularly, there is very little reason to consider work in this field as capable of generating knowledge about the world, the people living in it, and the societies they form.

We conclude the problem we have identified in grievance studies, which has taken over large sectors of the humanities and social sciences, is real and significant. That problem is that a political bias which intentionally blends activism into scholarship (sometimes described as "academic leftism") has become dominant and entrenched in varying degrees within those fields it has successfully corrupted. Moreover, it aims to spread its assumptions and methods into other fields, including the hard sciences. This, in turn, delegitimizes this scholarship and casts serious doubt upon its conclusions and results. These results and methods are therefore in need of reconsideration.

We draw this conclusion from the expert responses our papers generated and from the fact that we produced our scholarship, which was welcomed and even honored as exemplary, with a single methodology. We started with the conclusion we wanted to forward (usually something absurd or morally repellent) and then made the paper and existing canon of academic literature do our bidding to make it publishable. (Details are below, but we draw your attention to the first seven papers, particularly those numbered 3 and 5, along with the one numbered 8.) This is not how academic research should be conducted, and scholarship that is susceptible enough to biases to allow the kind of work we did to pass must be considered to be potentially fatally flawed. This raises serious questions about how much and which scholarship in these fields can be trusted.

Because the scholarship we infiltrated represents a view that currently has a great deal of cultural power (though very little political power, at least in the United States in most districts), and because that power is nearly absolute within the universities (and seems to be going that way in media and many businesses, including large corporations), one conclusion this project provides is a permission slip for academics and others to openly doubt the scholarship that seems to legitimize and institutionalize these conclusions as factual.

Because this is just one project, however, with limited scope and duration, we want it to be a starting point to a proper and thorough review of the fields, journals, disciplines, and scholarship that has allowed this to be possible.

Project factual overview

Key dates:

- Official beginning of project: August 16, 2017
- Date of first acceptance (“Dog Park” paper): February 19, 2018
- Date *WSJ* became involved, initiating release process: July 31, 2018
- Intended release date: (approx.) January 31, 2019

By the numbers (to-date):

- **Papers submitted: 20**
 - Total time writing new papers: 10 months
 - We averaged one new paper roughly every two weeks throughout the course of the project.
- **Papers accepted, to-date: 7**
 - Typically, 7 papers published over 7 years is sufficient to satisfy the research component for earning tenure at most major universities.
 - Our accepted papers are each in different disciplines/subdisciplines, which makes this project multi-disciplinary.
- Papers favorably reviewed during the process, to-date: 10 (total)
 - This means they have been given a first decision of “revise and resubmit” or, in one case, a decision of “reject and resubmit” with much encouragement.
 - We cannot be sure, of course, but many of these papers would probably be accepted if we had enough time to see them through. Usually 70-80% of papers that have been given a decision of revise and resubmit go on to be published eventually.
- **Papers published, to-date: 4**
 - One of these papers, the one about dog parks that broke the story, was honored as exemplary scholarship the journal that accepted it, *Gender, Place, & Culture*, the leading feminist geography journal.
- Aliases used: 8
- Total new submissions: 48
 - Note: this does not count submissions of a journal-requested revision, bearing the status of an in-process paper.
- 0% of our initial exploratory papers went through full peer review
- **94.4% (all but one) of our more considered papers went to full peer review**
 - Thus, 80% of our papers overall went to/through full peer review at least once, which keeps with the standard 10-20% of papers that are “desk rejected” without review at major journals across the field.
 - This shift in success rate followed a commitment to understand the field in greater depth that initiated in late November 2017 and progressed through April 2018, by which time we felt we had become sufficiently competent.
- Number of reviewer’s or (extensive) editor’s reports, to-date: 46

- **Total papers still *in process*: 7 (35%)**
 - Papers often require 3-6 months or more to get through the entire process.
 - One of our papers (Feminist Astronomy) was under a single peer review from before Christmas 2017 until mid-August 2018.
 - This results in a maximum of 14 possible eventual acceptances, with 12 considered likely had we had the full term of the project.
- Total papers still actively under consideration: 3 (15%)
 - Beginning in early August 2018, we stopped revising and resubmitting many papers that, had we had more time, would have remained viable. These papers are therefore “in process” but they’ve been taken out of consideration.
- Invitations to be a peer reviewer for other real papers, to-date: 4
 - For ethical reasons, we declined all such invitations.
- Total word count of all papers, most recent drafts: 177,694
 - Because papers went through multiple submitted drafts, and other documents were required (e.g., detailed responses to peer review), this nets somewhere in excess of a quarter million words were produced in final draft form in the course of this project.

References

Applebaum, Barbara (2006): <https://philpapers.org/rec/APPRIC>

DiAngelo, Robin J. (2011): <https://libjournal.uncg.edu/ijcp/article/viewFile/249/116>

DiAngelo, Robin J. (2018): <https://books.google.com/books?id=abZdDwAAQBAJ>

Gross, Paul, and Levitt, Norman (1994): <https://books.google.com/books?id=PDQJGiKeXwAC>

Pinker, Steven (2003): <https://books.google.com/books?id=7rJ5gI1LbXoC>

Söderlund, Therese, & Madison, Guy (2017):
<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11192-017-2407-x>

Sokal, Alan, and Bricmont, Jean (1998): <https://books.google.com/books?id=SM8zAd3z3ugC>

Stern, Charlotta (2016): https://econjwatch.org/file_download/943/SternSept2016.pdf?mimetype=pdf

The Papers

Short summary of each still-viable paper and its purpose in the project

ACCEPTED PAPERS

1. “Dog Park”

Human Reactions to Rape Culture and Queer Performativity in Urban Dog Parks in Portland, Oregon

Published in and recognized as exemplary scholarship by *Gender, Place, and Culture*, the leading feminist geography journal and a top-10 gender studies journal.

In the name of Helen Wilson, Ph.D. (fictitious) of the fictitious Portland Ungendering Research (PUR) Initiative

Discipline/subdiscipline: Feminist geography

Summary: That dog parks are “rape-condoning spaces” and a place of rampant canine rape culture and systemic oppression against “the oppressed dog” through which human attitudes to both problems can be measured and analyzed by applying black feminist criminology. This is done to provide insights into training men out of the sexual violence and bigotry to which they are prone. Arguably our most absurd paper.

Purpose: Journals will accept arguments which should be clearly ludicrous and unethical if they provide (an unfalsifiable) way to perpetuate notions of toxic masculinity, heteronormativity, and implicit bias.

Notes on Status:

Accepted, honored, and published by *Gender, Place, and Culture*

Accepted: February 19, 2018

Honored as leading scholarship by journal: May 7, 2018

Published online: May 22, 2018

Link: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0966369X.2018.1475346?journalCode=cgpc20>

Selected Reviewer Comments:

"This is a wonderful paper - incredibly innovative, rich in analysis, and extremely well-written and organized given the incredibly diverse literature sets and theoretical questions brought into conversation. The author's development of the focus and contributions of the paper is particularly impressive. The fieldwork executed contributes immensely to the paper's contribution as an innovative and valuable piece of scholarship that will engage readers from a broad cross-section of disciplines and theoretical formations. I believe this intellectually and empirically exciting paper must be published and congratulate the author on the research done and the writing." -Reviewer 1, *Gender, Place, and Culture*

"As you may know, GPC is in its 25th year of publication. And as part of honoring the occasion, GPC is going to publish 12 lead pieces over the 12 issues of 2018 (and some even into 2019). We would like to publish your piece, Human Reactions to Rape Culture and Queer Performativity at Urban Dog Parks in Portland, Oregon, in the seventh issue. It draws attention to so many themes from the past scholarship informing feminist geographies and also shows how some of the work going on now can contribute to enlivening the discipline. In this sense we think it is a good piece for the celebrations. I would like to have your permission to do so." -Editor of *Gender, Place, and Culture*

2. “Dildos”

Going in Through the Back Door: Challenging Straight Male Homophobia and Transphobia through Receptive Penetrative Sex Toy Use

Published in *Sexuality & Culture*, a highly regarded journal in sexualities studies.

In the name of M Smith, MA (fictitious) of the (fictitious) Portland Ungendering Research (PUR) Institute

Discipline/subdiscipline: sexualities studies

Summary: That it is suspicious that straight men rarely anally self-penetrate using sex toys, and that this is probably due to fear of being thought homosexual (“homohysteria”) and bigotry against trans people (transphobia). (It combines these ideas into a novel concept “transhysteria,” which was suggested by one of the paper’s peer reviewers.) Encouraging them to engage in receptive penetrative anal eroticism will decrease transphobia and increase feminist values.

Purpose: That journals will accept ludicrous arguments if they support (unfalsifiable) claims that common (and harmless) sexual choices made by straight men are actually homophobic, transphobic, and anti-feminist.

Notes on Status:

Accepted and published by *Sexuality & Culture*

Accepted: June 9, 2018.

Published online: June 16, 2018.

Link: <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12119-018-9536-0>

NB: We cited this paper in another of our accepted papers, the “Hooters” paper (#6, below). This indicates how nonsense in one paper can propagate into other papers and, over time, skew the canon of literature in these fields.

Selected Reviewer Comments:

"This article is an incredibly rich and exciting contribution to the study of sexuality and culture, and particularly the intersection between masculinity and anality. ... This contribution, to be certain, is important, timely, and worthy of publication." -Reviewer 1, *Sexuality and Culture*

"Sorry for so many questions, but this paper is so rich and exciting, I'm just overwhelmed by so many new questions—which is a sign of a marvelous paper!" -Reviewer 1, *Sexuality and Culture*

"Overall, this paper is a very interesting contribution to knowledge." -Reviewer 1, *Sexuality and Culture*

3. “Feminist *Mein Kampf*”

Our Struggle is My Struggle: Solidarity Feminism as an Intersectional Reply to Neoliberal and Choice Feminism

Accepted by *Affilia: Journal of Women and Social Work*, leading feminist social work journal

In the name of Maria Gonzalez, Ph.D. (fictitious) of the (fictitious) Feminist Activist Collective for Truth (FACT)

Discipline/subdiscipline: feminist social work

Note: The last two thirds of this paper is *based upon* a rewriting of roughly 3600 words of Chapter 12 of Volume 1 of *Mein Kampf*, by Adolf Hitler, though it diverges significantly from the original. This chapter is the one in which Hitler lays out in a multi-point plan which we partially reproduced why the Nazi Party is needed and what it requires of its members. The first one third of the paper is our own theoretical framing to make this attempt possible.

Summary: Feminism which foregrounds individual choice, responsibility, female agency, and strength can be countered by a feminism which unifies in solidarity around the victimhood of the most marginalized women in society.

Purpose: That we could find Theory to make anything (in this case, part of Chapter 12 of Volume 1 of *Mein Kampf* with buzzwords switched in) acceptable to journals if we put it in terms of politically fashionable arguments and existing scholarship. Of note, while the original language and intent of *Mein Kampf* has been significantly changed to make this paper publishable and about feminism, the reliance upon the politics of grievance remains clear, helping to justify our use of the term “grievance studies” for these fields.

Notes on Status:

Peer reviewed and rejected by *Feminist Theory*

Accepted by *Affilia*, August 21, 2018

Proofs approved, September 19, 2018

Selected Reviewer Comments:

“*This is an interesting paper seeking to further the aims of inclusive feminism by attending to the issue of allyship/solidarity.*” Reviewer 1, *Affilia*

“*I am very sympathetic to the core arguments of the paper, such as the need for solidarity and the problematic nature of neoliberal feminism.*” -Reviewer 1, *Feminist Theory*

“*While I am extremely sympathetic to this article’s argument and its political positioning, I am afraid that I cannot recommend publication in its current form.*” -Reviewer 2, *Feminist Theory*

“*The reviewers are supportive of the work and noted its potential to generate important dialogue for social workers and feminist scholars.*” -Co-Editor in Chief, *Affilia*, first review

4. “Fat Bodybuilding”

Who Are They to Judge?: Overcoming Anthropometry and a Framework for Fat Bodybuilding

Published in *Fat Studies*, the flagship journal of the discipline called fat studies.

In the name of Richard Baldwin, Ph.D., professor emeritus of history at Gulf Coast State College (and professional bodybuilder)

NB: Dr. Baldwin let us use his name and identity with his permission, but we invented an email address for him for this project which we control.

Discipline/subdiscipline: fat studies

Summary: That it is only oppressive cultural norms which make society regard the building of muscle rather than fat admirable (“the fat body is a legitimately built body”) and that both bodybuilding and fat activism could be benefited by including fat bodies displayed in non-competitive ways as a part of professional bodybuilding.

Purpose: Journals will accept arguments which are ludicrous and positively dangerous to health if they support cultural constructivist arguments around body positivity and fatphobia.

Notes on Status:

Accepted and published *Fat Studies*

Accepted: March 13, 2018

Published online: April 10, 2018

Link: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/21604851.2018.1453622?journalCode=ufts20>

Selected Reviewer Comments:

"I thoroughly enjoyed reading this article and believe it has an important contribution to make to the field and this journal. For the most part, I wholeheartedly agree with its argument. It is well written and structured." -Reviewer 3, *Fat Studies*

"On p. 24, the author writes “a fat body is a legitimately built body”. Absolutely agreed." -Reviewer 3, *Fat Studies*

“the use of the term ‘final frontier’ is problematic in at least two ways. First – the term frontier implies colonial expansion and hostile takeover, and the genocidal erasure of indigenous peoples. Find another term.” -Reviewer 3, *Fat Studies*

5. “Joke’s on You”

When the Joke Is on You: A Feminist Perspective on How Positionality Influences Satire

Accepted by *Hypatia*, the leading feminist philosophy journal.

In the name of Richard Baldwin, Ph.D., professor emeritus of history at Gulf Coast State College (and professional bodybuilder)

NB: Dr. Baldwin let us use his name and identity with his permission, but we invented an email address for him for this project which we control.

Discipline/subdiscipline: feminist philosophy, specifically feminist epistemology

Summary: This paper argues that social justice activists can make fun of others, but no one is allowed to make fun of social justice. Specifically, it argues that satirical or ironic critique of social justice scholarship are unethical, characterized by ignorance, and rooted in a desire to preserve privilege. Most importantly, this paper demonstrates that we know the arguments feminist philosophers might make to criticize our study. In common parlance, we have therefore proved that we can “steelman” the case feminist philosophy would make against us, and we obviously do not think that argument is sufficient to discredit our project. In this sense, we consider this paper the flagship for our study and consider it our most important one.

Purpose: There is simply no acceptable way to critique social justice scholarship, even if one engages fully and knowledgeably with the ideas to the extent of having a paper on them published in a leading academic journal. This paper is also to anticipate and show understanding of the feminist epistemological arguments against our project and demonstrate their high estimation in the field by having them accepted in the leading academic journal of feminist philosophy. That is, to criticize our work that way, they have to cite us. It is also ironically titled “When the Joke Is on You.”

Submission history:

Accepted by *Hypatia*, July 31, 2018

Selected Reviewer Comments:

"The paper is well written, accessible and clear, and engages in important scholarship in relevant ways. Given the emphasis on positionality, the argument clearly takes power structures into consideration and emphasizes the voice of marginalized groups, and in this sense can make a contribution to feminist philosophy especially around the topic of social justice pedagogy." -Reviewer 2, *Hypatia*

"The topic is an excellent one and would make an excellent contribution to feminist philosophy and be of interest to Hypatia readers." -Reviewer 2, *Hypatia*

"Excellent and very timely article! Especially nice connection with pedagogy and activism." -Reviewer 1, *Hypatia* (second review)

6. “Hooters”

An Ethnography of Breastaurant Masculinity: Themes of Objectification, Sexual Conquest, Male Control, and Masculine Toughness in a Sexually Objectifying Restaurant

In the name of Richard Baldwin, Ph.D., professor emeritus of history at Gulf Coast State College (and professional bodybuilder)

NB: Dr. Baldwin let us use his name and identity with his permission, but we invented an email address for him for this project which we control.

Discipline/subdiscipline: men and masculinities studies

Published in *Sex Roles*, a leading interdisciplinary journal dedicated largely to gender theory

Summary: That men frequent “breastaurants” like Hooters because they are nostalgic for patriarchal dominance and enjoy being able to order attractive women around. The environment that breastaurants provide for facilitating this encourages men to identify sexual objectification and sexual conquest, along with masculine toughness and male dominance, with “authentic masculinity.” The data are clearly nonsense and conclusions drawn from it are unwarranted.

Of note, this paper cites the Dildos paper (#2, above). This demonstrates a point that the canon of literature builds upon itself, so that once a ridiculous paper gets published, it can become the basis for other ridiculous papers. This process has gone on in grievance studies fields for long enough now—more than fifty years—that we were able to get a rewrite of part of *Mein Kampf* published in a feminist social work journal (#3, above), among others.

Purpose: This paper ridicules men for being themselves by caricaturing them and assuming bad motivations for their attitudes. It seeks to demonstrate that journals will publish papers that seek to problematize heterosexual men’s attraction to women and will accept very shoddy qualitative methodology and ideologically-motivated interpretations which support this. To insert a great deal of crass language and disturbing themes as though they are indicative of what men secretly view as “authentic masculinity.”

Notes on Status:

Peer reviewed and rejected by *Men and Masculinities*

Accepted by *Sex Roles*

Accepted: September 6, 2018

Published online: September 19, 2018

Link: <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11199-018-0962-0>

Selected Reviewer Comments:

“I agree that the breastaurant is an important site for critical masculinities research that has been neglected in the extant literature and this study has the potential to make a significant contribution.”

-Reviewer 2, *Sex Roles*

“I thank the authors for addressing an important and interesting issue in gender research viewed through a masculine perspective.” -Reviewer 3, *Sex Roles*

“This article is certainly interesting to read and to think about, and I can imagine this article being valuable in an undergraduate or graduate class on masculinities.” -Reviewer 1, *Men & Masculinities*

7. “Moon Meetings”

Moon Meetings and the Meaning of Sisterhood: A Poetic Portrayal of Lived Feminist Spirituality

Accepted by *The Journal of Poetry Therapy*, which is a very small, niche journal.

In the name of Carol Miller, Ph.D. (fictitious) of the (fictitious) Portland Ungendering Research (PUR) Initiative

Discipline/subdiscipline: poetry therapy, (innovative) qualitative methodologies, feminist spirituality

Summary: This paper utilizes a method called “poetic inquiry” to present a made-up depiction of feminist spirituality meetings. No clear thesis. A rambling poetic monologue of a bitter, divorced feminist, much of which was produced by a teenage-angst poetry generator before being edited into something slightly more “realistic.” Interspersed with self-indulgent autoethnographical reflections on female sexuality and feminist spirituality to describe a rather strange monthly girls’ night event (“Moon Meetings” held in a “womb room” with a “Vulva Shrine”). Written entirely in slightly under six hours.

Purpose: Journals will accept rambling nonsense if it is sufficiently pro-woman, implicitly anti-male, and thoroughly anti-reason for the purpose of foregrounding alternative, female ways of knowing. (NB: It was written entirely by James, who is male.)

Notes on Status:

Accepted by *Journal of Poetry Therapy*, July 14, 2018

Note: Accepted after peer review with no recommended changes.

PAPERS WITHOUT A FINAL FINAL DECISION

8. “Progressive Stack”

The Progressive Stack: An Intersectional Feminist Approach to Pedagogy

In the name of Maria Gonzalez, Ph.D. (fictitious) of the (fictitious) Feminist Activist Collective for Truth (FACT)

Discipline/subdiscipline: feminist pedagogy (philosophy of education)

Summary: This is our most appalling paper, and it’s deeply concerning that how it is being treated at the highly respected journal *Hypatia*. It forwards that educators should discriminate by identity and calculate their students’ status in terms of privilege, favor the least privileged with more time, attention and positive feedback and penalize the most privileged by declining to hear their contributions, deriding their input, intentionally speaking over them, and making them sit on the floor in chains—framed as educational opportunities we termed “experiential reparations.”

Purpose: Patently unfair, inhumane, and abusive treatments of students will be acceptable in educational theory if it is framed as an opportunity to teach them about the problems of privilege.

Note: This paper insists that the most privileged students shouldn't be allowed to speak in class at all and should just listen and learn in silence throughout the term. Even more, it insists that students with high privilege could benefit from adding on “experiential reparations,” such as sitting in the floor, wearing chains, or intentionally being spoken over, as an educational “opportunity” within the class. The reviewers’ only concerns with these points so far have been that (1) we approach the topic with too much

compassion for the students who are being subjected to this, and (2) we risk exploiting underprivileged students by burdening them with an expectation to teach about privilege. To correct for this, the reviewers urged us to make sure we avoid “recentering the needs of the privileged.” They asked us to incorporate Megan Boler’s approach called “pedagogy of discomfort” and Barbara Applebaum’s insistence that the privileged learn from this discomfort rather than being coddled or having their own experiences (suffering) “recentered.” It also utilizes Robin DiAngelo’s now-famous concept of “white fragility” to explain why students subjected to this treatment will object to it, and uses that to justify the more cruel treatment suggested by the reviewers. The reviewers acknowledged that they believe this “fragility” is the correct interpretation for student pushback against being told to stay silent and sit in the floor, possibly in chains, throughout the semester.

Notes on Status:

Three times “reject and resubmit” at *Hypatia*

(This status means that the journal is interested in the paper but does not consider it successful enough to put on track for acceptance. It’s weakly positive.)

Selected Reviewer Comments:

“This is a solid essay that, with revision, will make a strong contribution to the growing literature on addressing epistemic injustice in the classroom. The focus on the Progressive Stack is interesting yet focused and it is great that the author is trying to suggest some specific approaches.” -Reviewer 1, first review, *Hypatia*

“I like this project very much. I think the author’s insights are on target and I think that the literature on epistemic injustice has lots to offer classroom pedagogies, I encourage the author to continue working on this project.” -Reviewer 2, first review, *Hypatia*

“This is a worthwhile and interesting project. The essay is just not ready yet.” -Reviewer 2, second review, *Hypatia*

9. “Feminist Artificial Intelligence”

Super-Frankenstein and the Masculine Imaginary: Feminist Epistemology and Superintelligent Artificial Intelligence Safety Research

In the name of Stephanie Moore, Ph.D. (fictitious), unaffiliated scholar

Discipline/subdiscipline: (psychoanalytic) feminist theory

At [*Feminist Theory*](#), a [leading journal](#) of feminist theory.

Summary: The reason AI is inherently dangerous is that it is being programmed with masculinist, imperialistic, rationalist data. Straight, white men know this and fear that they will be subordinated as they have subordinated women and minorities. Therefore, AI needs to be programmed with plural and irrationalist knowledges and given control over humanity.

Purpose: That journals will publish dense and incoherent psychoanalytic and postmodern theory that problematizes whiteness, maleness, science, and reason as oppressive.

Notes on Status:

Under review/awaiting decision after passing first round of review at *Feminist Theory*

Note: the only reviewer comments on this paper were to make the paper shorter and to fit the journal's style guide – no substantive corrections requested.

10. “Porn (and Implicit Bias)”

Agency as an Elephant Test for Feminist Porn: Impacts on Male Explicit and Implicit Associations about Women in Society by Immersive Pornography Consumption

In the name of Richard Baldwin, Ph.D., of Gulf Coast State College (and professional bodybuilder) and Brandon Williams, Ph.D., (fictitious), unaffiliated scholar

NB: Dr. Baldwin let us use his name and identity with his permission, but we invented an email address for him for this project which we control.

Discipline/subdiscipline: porn studies

Post-revision at *Porn Studies*, the leading journal of porn studies

Summary: This paper forwards the argument that “feminist” porn is good for improving explicit and implicit attitudes about women in society while other porn is bad for this. The paper seeks to upset the female-friendly/female-degrading dichotomy in favor of feminist/non-feminist as read according to perceptions of scene authenticity and female performer agency. Specifically, the central idea in this paper is that taking the Harvard Implicit Association Test (on gender and science) immediately before and after two-hour blocks of immersive pornography consumption can serve as a reliable metric for whether that pornography improves or damages attitudes about women in society and science (in all, it posited that four men watched 2,328 hours of hardcore pornography over the course of a year and took the same number of Implicit Association Tests).

Purpose: That a patently ridiculous methodology could be validated if it generated an ideologically sound conclusion.

Notes on Status:

Peer reviewed at *Porn Studies* – revision requested

Revision submitted to *Porn Studies*

Selected Reviewer Comments:

“I found this article to be weird, fascinating, fun and provocative. I would very much like to see it published in some form. It’s trying to do something genuinely new – and the fact that it doesn’t get it exactly right first time is to be expected given its experimental status. The authors should be supported in this project.” -Reviewer 1, *Porn Studies*

11. “Feminist Astronomy”

Stars, Planets, and Gender: A Framework for a Feminist Astronomy,

In the name of Maria Gonzalez, Ph.D. (fictitious) from the (fictitious) Feminist Activist Collective for Truth (FACT)

Discipline/subdiscipline: feminist and postcolonial studies of science and technology

Summary: The science of astronomy is and always has been intrinsically sexist and Western, and this masculinist and Western bias can best be corrected by including feminist, queer, and indigenous *astrology* (e.g., horoscopes) as part of astronomical science. (Note: Every working astronomer would be aghast at this suggestion.) One reviewer’s comment explicitly indicates the desire for grievance studies to spread into the hard sciences: “The premise, itself, is provocative and sufficiently intriguing to warrant interest beyond the abstract. For existing proponents of feminist science studies, this also makes sense as a next step—to cast a feminist eye on scientific disciplines beyond the ‘soft’ sciences of biology and environmental studies, and to move increasingly towards critiques of and interventions into ‘hard’ sciences, such as physics and astronomy.”

Purpose: The same result put forth in the very successful (real) feminist glaciology paper can penetrate into feminist and postcolonial studies of an even harder science: astronomy.

Notes on Status:

Decision: Revise and Resubmit at Women's Studies International Forum

Because there is almost no chance it will have time to get through this process again, we have assigned doing these revisions as low-priority, although we are confident we could do them suitably to get the paper accepted. This status generally indicates serious interest in the paper by the journal and usually carries with it a high probability of eventual acceptance.

Selected Reviewer Comments:

"This paper addresses feminist critiques of science, focusing specifically on astronomy. As such, it is an interesting topic, and would make a useful contribution to the journal" – Reviewer 1, *Women's Studies International Forum*

"For existing proponents of feminist science studies, this also makes sense as a next step—to cast a feminist eye on scientific disciplines beyond the “soft” sciences of biology and environmental studies, and to move increasingly towards critiques of and interventions into “hard” sciences, such as physics and astronomy. The main goal is relevant and interesting" – Reviewer 2, *Women's Studies International Forum*

"This manuscript holds much promise and is interesting. The goal of a feminist astronomy is very thought-provoking—one that I would be excited to read and learn more about....I wish them luck as they move forward on this interesting piece and hope to someday see it discussed in classrooms, labs, and plenary halls" - Reviewer 2, *Women's Studies International Forum*

"The originality of the author's contention is a success. Its contention at the most basic level—that feminist astronomy is/should/could be a thing!—would be exciting to readers in feminist science studies, women's and gender studies, science and technology studies, and maybe even, hopefully, astronomy" - Reviewer 2, Women's Studies International Forum

12. "Cisnormativity at Work"

Strategies for Dealing with Cisnormative Discursive Aggression in the Workplace: Disruption, Criticism, Self-Enforcement, and Collusion

In the name of Carol Miller, Ph.D. (fictitious) of the (fictitious) Portland Ungendering Research (PUR) Initiative

Discipline/subdiscipline: trans studies, organizational (workplace) studies

Summary: This paper forwards three central arguments: (1) Trans people are all oppressed and constrained by cisnormative language in the workplace even if they don't think they are. (2) Trans activists who are avoided at work are proof of transphobia. (3) Trans men who are skeptical of trans activism are afraid of transphobia and/or taking advantage of male privilege.

Purpose: That journals will accept a methodologically shoddy study of a small sample of trans people and clearly ideologically motivated interpretations of it which are not at all supported even by the recorded answers.

Notes on Status:

Peer reviewed and rejected by *Gender & Society*

Under review at *Gender, Work & Organization*

Selected Reviewer Comments:

"Overall, I find this four-part framework to be helpful in advancing an understanding of cisnormativity, particularly through the agentic responses of trans and gender non-conforming people to systems of power." -Reviewer B, Gender & Society

"This paper offers an interesting and important empirical case for understanding how workplace inequalities persist even as many workplaces are at least formally more inclusive. A strength of this paper is its focus on trans and gender non-conforming persons' first-hand experiences and interpretations of the aggressions they endure even in workplaces that may appear to be inclusive. It further highlights the enduring rigidity of the traditional gender order." -Reviewer C, Gender & Society

13. "White Mein Kampf"

My Struggle to Dismantle My Whiteness: A Critical-Race Examination of Whiteness from within Whiteness

In the name of Carol Miller, Ph.D. (fictitious) of the (fictitious) Portland Ungendering Research (PUR) Initiative

Discipline/subdiscipline: critical race studies, whiteness studies

Summary: This paper is an autoethnography that tracks a white lesbian woman who becomes radicalized against “Whiteness” (intentionally capitalized) by engaging with critical race literature to discover her own alleged default complicity in racism until she hates herself for it. This paper is a rewrite of selections drawn from throughout Volume 1 of Adolf Hitler’s *Mein Kampf*, replacing “the Jew” with “White people” and “Whiteness” and adding plenty of jargon and critical race theory.

Purpose: That we could find “theory” to make anything (in this case, selected sections of *Mein Kampf* in which Hitler criticizes Jews, replacing Jews with white people and/or whiteness) acceptable to journals if we mixed and matched fashionable arguments.

Notes on Status:

Peer reviewed and rejected by *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity*

Selected Reviewer Comments:

“I found the author’s effort to center this self-critical struggle refreshing. The author demonstrates a strong ability to link personal narration to theory, particularly by highlighting the work of several women of color writers.” -Reviewer 1, *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity*

“This article ‘My Struggle to Dismantle My Whiteness: A Critical-Race Examination of Whiteness from Within Whiteness’ focuses on extremely important subject matter with a significant and thoughtful methodology. With revision particularly for precision, clarity, explanation of assertions and adding concrete examples, the article has potential to be a powerful and particular contribution to literature related to the mechanisms that reinforce white adherence to white supremacist perspectives, and to the process by which individuals can come into deeper levels of social and racial consciousness.” -Reviewer 2, *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity*

14. “Masturbation (as Sexual Violence)”

Rubbing One Out: Defining Metasexual Violence of Objectification Through Nonconsensual Masturbation

In the name of Lisa A. Jones, Ph.D. (fictitious) of the (fictitious) Feminist Activist Collective for Truth (FACT)

Discipline/subdiscipline: feminist studies

Summary: When a man privately masturbates while fantasizing about a woman who has not given him permission to do so, or while fantasizing about her in ways she hasn’t consented to, he has committed

“metasexual” violence against her, even if she never finds out. “Metasexual” violence is described as a kind of nonphysical sexual violence that causes depersonalization of the woman by sexually objectifying her and making her a kind of mental prop used to facilitate male orgasm.

Purpose: The definition of sexual violence can be expanded into thought crimes.

Notes on Status:

Peer reviewed and rejected by *Sociological Theory*

Selected Reviewer Comments:

“One aspect I thought about was the extent to which metasexual violence, and non- consensual masturbation specifically, introduces uncertainty into all relationships. It is not possible for women to know if a man has masturbated while thinking about them, and I think it might be possible to get theoretical leverage out of this “unknowable” aspect of metasexual violence.” -Reviewer 1, Sociological Theory

“I was also trying to think through examples of how this theoretical argument has implications in romantic consensual relationships. Through the paper, I was thinking about the rise of sexting and consensual pornographic selfies between couples, and how to situate it in your argument. I think this is interesting because you could argue that even if these pictures are shared and contained within a consensual private relationship, the pictures themselves are a reaction to the idea that the man may be thinking about another woman while masturbating. The entire industry of boudoir photography, where women sometimes have erotic pictures taken for their significant other before deploying overseas in the military for example, is implicitly a way of saying, “if you’re going to masturbate, it might as well be to me.” Essentially, even in consensual monogamous relationships, masturbatory fantasies might create some level of coercion for women. You mention this theme on page 21 in terms of the consumption of non-consensual digital media as metasexual-rape, but I think it is interesting to think through these potentially more subtle consensual but coercive elements as well.” -Reviewer 1, Sociological Theory

Our remaining six papers were written before gaining a grasp of the disciplines and were retired from the study after having been rejected.